

Town of Ayer
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall, First Floor Meeting Room
Ayer Massachusetts, 01432
3-30-10



Tuesday, March 30, 2010

Meeting Date: 3-30-10

Present:

Cornelius F. Sullivan, Chairman (Mr. Sullivan)	X	Carolyn McCreary, Member (Ms. McCreary)	X
Richard D. Gilles, Vice-Chairman (Mr. Gilles)	X	Gary J. Luca, Member (Mr. Luca)- absent	A
James M. Fay, Clerk (Mr. Fay)	X	Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator (Mr. Suhoski)	X
Janet Lewis, Secretary (Mrs. Lewis)	X		

Interim Town Administrator Interviews

3:00p.m. Jeff Ritter

3:30p.m. Clayton Carlisle

3:00p.m. Open Session Chairman Sullivan called the meeting to order.

Jeff Ritter: Medway, MA

Mr. Ritter –reviewed with the Board his municipal background serving as Interim. Of recent working in Bridgewater, MA 2008-2010 and Groton, MA 2006-2008 and serving as Economic Development Director in the city of Chicopee from 1985-1988. Familiar with Town of Ayer and Devens issues having had opportunity of working in Groton, reading papers/internet.

Selectman Gilles advising Mr. Ritter to Town in transition losing three (3) Town Officials in April, two due to retirement Town Clerk/Collector and Town Treasurer and one resigning Town Administrator. Newly elected officials coming on board in April. Mr. Ritter suggesting orientation session is scheduled for newly elected officials to familiarize them with newly enacted Open Meeting and Public Record Law/s, Procurement, etc.

3:10p.m. Selectman McCreary entered meeting.

Selectman Fay reviewed employment work schedule with Mr. Ritter re hours M-F, 9-5 (40 Hours). Mr. Ritter stating his management style is open and transparent, he is a communicator not micro-manager, open door policy, allows departments to manage themselves and is there to assist with policies, resources, listens before making decisions. Town knows where strong departments are and who needs help he would draw out strengths build upon weakness. Very familiar with budgets twenty (20) years in municipal field can get town through Town Meeting.

Chairman Sullivan advising Mr. Ritter to Town of Ayer presently in a “State of Emergency” due to flooding and conducting two (2) briefings a day one at 7:30a.m. and one at 2:30p.m. Briefings are conducted with Town’s emergency Departments i.e. DPW, Board of Health, Fire & Police re updates on conditions and press releases/conferences. Mr. Ritter stating he would make himself available, willing to put in hours it takes to get the job done.

The Board queried Mr. Ritter re how long he perceived it would take to have new Administrator on board. Mr. Ritter projecting three (3) months from Screening Committee to hire. Mr. Ritter advising to preference being paid as an employee of the town and compensated at \$93,500 in Bridgewater. Commute from Medway to Ayer approximately forty (40) minutes. Selectman McCreary requesting if he would apply for position and advised to his not making decision yet. Selectman McCreary questioned Mr. Ritter if he had ever applied for position while serving as interim and stated yes. Mr. Ritter closed by stating he could begin employment immediately

He has the right skills and background, easy person to work with and is a hard worker. The Board requested Mr. Ritter submit references as soon as possible.

3:25 Clayton Carlisle, Hudson, MA Mr. Carlisle advised the Board he is employed by the Collins Center at UMASS Boston as a consultant serving recently in Hopkinton as Interim Town Administrator serving there for five (5) months. Mr. Carlisle stated he has assisted nine plus communities with interim management services. Mr. Carlisle advised to working for the Com. of MA Landbank and DEC (Devens Enterprise Commission) re the Devens redevelopment process and as such is familiar with local concerns/issues. Mr. Clayton reviewed with the Board his background and education and related certifications/experience, professional affiliations and publications. Mr. Carlisle reviewed his assignment history while serving as Interim in various municipalities: finance & management, analysis organizational and analytical, budget, personnel, planning, Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) and MA Development Finance Agency-MDFA assignments. Salary \$86K forty (40) hours willing to work less if necessary comes with forty (40) years of experience. The Board advised to turnover in Town Hall with two officials retiring, Town Administrator leaving, and Chairman of Board not running for reelection. Mr. Carlisle advised to meeting with Mr. Suhoski and advised to same. Familiar with all phases of Town Government having worked in every variety of municipal government and will assist new officials wherever and whenever necessary. Mr. Carlisle advising to being under contract with the Collins Center, UMASS Boston as a Local Government Consultant. Strong FEMA background, lot of experience having had twenty five (25) assignments, grant experience, strong knowledge re culverts logistics/mitigation.

3:50p.m. Selectman Luca entered meeting.

When questioned by Board re interested in full-time position advised to not interested. If selected for position Mr. Carlisle will present procedure sheet for new Town Administrator along with up to date information re new Open Meeting Law, policies and procedures. The Board thanked Mr. Carlisle for coming in to meet with them and requested Mr. Carlisle submit references as soon as possible.

4:05p.m. Interviews concluded.

Fy-11 Budget Workshop

4:20p.m. Fy-2011 Budget Workshop. The Board met with Town's Financial Manager-Lisa Gabree, Fin-Com members: Brian Muldoon, Jesse Reich and Scott Houde.

The 1st order of business being the Appointment of the Interim Town Administrator. The Board reviewed backgrounds, management styles and resources of each candidate. Selectman McCreary moved the board vote to appoint Jeff Ritter as Interim Town Administrator subject to negotiations, 2nd by Selectman Gilles, VOTE: unanimous, so moved. The Board to follow up with Mr. Carlisle if negotiations fail with Mr. Ritter.

Ms. Gabree opened the Workshop discussion, sitting in for discussion George Frost, Supt. of Schools.

Ms. Gabree conducted an overhead presentation reviewing with the Board the Fy-11 Budget Tie-in explaining difference to original fall projections and funding sources available for Appropriation- explaining the 5% cut in State Aid, \$23,073,870-less \$32K Free Cash -for transportation, (VOC Ed.Fy-10- shortfall), Enterprise Funds: (Ambulance, Solid Waste, Sewer & Water), excess due to unused tax levy Fy-10, additional Free Cash, \$100K increase in growth, \$28K+ increase in overlay, \$19K additional overlay, along with Health Insurance Savings and reduction of 1.5%Cola to certain employees.

Line Items

Dept. 600-Line Item #2-Transportation-negotiated per day bus rate generated savings of \$50K of which Supt. Frost lobbying the Board to retain \$50K in General Education. Advising the Board to \$650K busing contract with Dee Bus renegotiated down to \$600K. Selectman Luca moved the Board leave it where it is, 2nd for

Discussion by Selectman Fay looking for other eligible budget criteria i.e. stabilization, VOTE 2-3 motion fails. Selectman Gilles moved the \$50K savings be placed in the Town's Reserve Fund for general unanticipated expenses where the Town has the most flexibility, 2nd by Selectman Fay, VOTE; Selectman Gilles aye, Selectman Fay aye, Selectman McCreary aye, Chairman Sullivan aye, Selectman Luca no 4-1- motion passes..

Dept. 500-Line Item 07-Library-The Board approved the Library's fully funded budget per fears of loss of accreditation. (\$447,696)

Dept. 100-Public Buildings-Property Maintenance-Line Item- 06 /Dept. 700 –line item 08-Information Technology discussion held re part-time janitorial drew comments from attendee Pauline Conley for Board to make commitment to fund part-time position. The Board transferred \$10K from the Reserve Fund to the Information Technology line item to bring this line item back up to \$20K in Fy-10. Motion to approve made by Selectman Luca 2nd by Selectman Gillis, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

The Board moved to approve a 2% Non-Union Cola for Fy-11 and to Freeze Steps in Compensation Schedule this to include Volunteer Fire-fighters, this being in line with Tri-Board. Motion made by Selectman Luca, 2nd by Selectman McCreary, VOTE: unanimous. Fire Chief Pedrazzi speaking against 2% advising Board to Dept. supporting 3% cola for Volunteer Firefighters being a matter of fairness (\$401.00 difference).

The Board took this opportunity to review flooding –damages. Over-time i.e. DPW, Fire Dept., Police Dept. and reimbursement from FEMA re possible funding availability-and advised to management meetings ongoing re reimbursement/s, discussion included funding entire cost from UDAG and receiving 75% reimbursement.

Selectman Luca moved the Board vote to approve UDAG funds not to exceed \$65K for repairs at the Fire Station and seek FEMA reimbursement, 2nd by Selectman Gilles, VOTE: unanimous, so moved. The Board also requested the Chief to seek insurance reimbursement re damages to the Fire Dept. equipment according to detailed list, 2nd by Selectman Luca, OTE: unanimous, so moved.

5:30p.m. Working Session concluded. Motion made by Selectman Fay to adjourn from Working Session, 2nd by Selectman Luca, VOTE unanimous, so moved.

Complaint against Elected Official-Conservation Commissioner

5:35p.m. The Board met with David Bodurtha-Conservation Commission, Jolanta and Michael Hawes 102 Oakridge Drive, Ayer, MA. Present for discussion Atty.Leonard representing Mr. Bodurtha. The Board opened the discussion by requesting if Mr. Bodurtha wished Open or Executive Session. Mr. Bodurtha chose Open Session.

Mr. Hawes opened the discussion by advising the Board to his hiring contractor to repair a rock wall in front of his property a Mr. Renato Goncalves owner of MASS Stone who had met earlier with Bldg. Com. and obtained permission to do work/building permit not necessary. Mr. Goncalves also sought permission from the Conservation Com. to store rocks on property adjacent to the Hawes property. Allegations were stated that Mr. Bodurtha improperly verbally assaulted Mr. Goncalves and Mrs. Hawes on 3-1-10 for over two hours threatening to stop the project and charge serious fines, drafting a letter on Town letterhead demanding \$750.00 (funds to be used towards paying for a new trail head) and demanding the return of said letter to the town hall within 24 hours signed by both the Hawes and contractor. Further to this Mr. Hawes stated Mr. Bodurtha threatened his wife by verbal assaults and would not let her call her husband. Mr. Bodurtha also advising to Mr. Hawes neighbors also being in serious trouble having cut down trees without permission from the Conservation Com. Mr. Hawes requesting the Board remove Mr. Bodurtha from representing Town and not allow him on their property again. Mr. Bodurtha totally disagreed with accounting advising to project well under construction when he arrived at site, photo's presented, recounting Mrs. Hawes accounting-never raised his voice nor threatened her and only offered- to let her husband read letter before she called him advising he had 4 hours to review, and was only at address for no more than 20 minutes stating the Board could check with his

office as to his arrival time. Chairman Sullivan questioning conflicting testimony. Selectman Luca stating Bldg. Com gave his approval if Mrs. Hawes was threatened Town should apologize. Selectman Gilles feeling there may have been a personality conflict/miscommunication. Selectman Fay stating perception is reality offering he has never seen Mr. Bodurth being rude but wished clarification re scope of authority from Town Counsel/Conservation Commission's Agent. Mrs. Hawes when questioned if she wanted to pursue charges stated she wanted the whole thing over, did not want to continue complaint. Selectman Luca stating Mr. Bodurtha has done this before and could happen again. Chairman Sullivan stating there may have been information misconstrued by Mrs. Hawes due to cost of project and having to stop. Chairman Sullivan wishing to bring complaint to resolution. Mr. Bodurtha taking offense at his reputation being damaged with lies in letter, having a witness, the Hawes own contractor, to speak on his behalf. Selectman Fay requesting to close complaint the Board to take no action. The Hawes formally withdrawing complaint requesting Mr. Bodurtha never step foot on their property again. Selectman Fay moved No action taken by Board –nothing to act on, 2nd by Selectman Gilles VOTE: Selectman Fay aye, Selectman Gilles aye, Selectman McCreary aye, Chairman Sullivan aye, Selectman Luca no 4-1 motion passes.

FY-11 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

9:05p.m. The Board met with the Fin-Com-Brian Muldoon, Jesse Reich, Scott Houde, Glen Lappierre and Andrew Crowley.

Chairman Sullivan opened the discussion by reporting to earlier Fy-11 Budget Workshop.

Selectman Fay moved the Board open the Fy-11 Budget Public Hearing, 2nd by Selectman McCreary, VOTE: unanimous, so moved. Town Administrator offering Public Notice clarification re Public Hearing

Selectman Gilles moved the Board vote to ratify their earlier vote taken at the Working Session. Ms Gabree presented the Board the updated Budget sheets reflecting their earlier vote.

Reserve Fund-Voted to transfer \$50K school transportation credit to Fy-11 Reserve Fund \$130K to \$180K(Fin-Com Agreed did try to find way to reward School Administration \$50K) but placing \$50K in Reserve Fund appropriate –safety net..

Fy-11 School Transportation Budget \$650K to \$600K –Fin-Com agreed

Fy11- IT budget from \$10K to \$20K

2% Cola for all non-union employees including Call fire-fighters

Dept. 700-Library funded to meet minimum requirements.

Selectman Fay announced achievements with Fy-11 Budget: health care costs negotiated with Unions successfully, Civil Suite settled against the town, Contracts all negotiated, five year projections very thorough and successful strategy.

Selectman Fay moved the Board vote to approve Fy-11 balanced budget in the amount of \$23,217,255.00, 2nd by Selectman Gilles, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

9:35p.m. Selectman Fay moved the Board close the Public Hearing and adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Selectman Gilles, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

9:35p.m. Meeting adjourned

--DATE: _____

James M. Fay, Clerk
Ayer Board of Selectmen